



## Flathead National Forest

650 Wolfpack Way  
Kalispell, MT 59901

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# News Release

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August 28, 2014



## Flathead National Forest Fall Prescribed Fire Projects

KALISPELL, MONT. – Ranger Districts on the Flathead National Forest are planning to conduct multiple fall season prescribed fire projects when weather, fuel conditions, and air quality become favorable. Burning is expected to start as early as next week and will continue through the close of open burning season on November 30, 2014. Smoke will be visible from various places in the Flathead Valley depending on the location of the burn units and weather conditions.

Each project will follow a Prescribed Fire Burn Plan. The prescribed fire projects are designed to reduce the potential for adverse effects, and minimize the potential for an escape as a wildland fire. These projects will be in compliance with Montana air quality standards and coordinated with Montana State Department of Environmental Quality to reduce the impacts of smoke to our neighbors, cooperators, and surrounding communities. The project areas include:

### **Tally Lake Ranger District:**

**Good Creek** – This ecosystem burn project targets 142 acres of mid to upper elevation shrub and conifer near Grouse Creek. Fire suppression has caused a change in species composition resulting in an encroachment of conifers into an open shrub field. Prescribed fire will reintroduce fire to overall improve wildlife habitat and reduce the conifer encroachment.

**Reed Canary Grass** – Three relatively small prescribed fires are planned as a pilot project to suppress an invasive species in the areas of Blast Lake and Martin Lakes.

**District Wide Pile Burning** – Hand or Machine piles are located in several locations within the Tally Lake District. Smoke will be visible in the Griffin Creek, Logan Creek, Lost Creek, Bootjack Lake, Beaver Lake, Ashley Lake and Tally Lake areas. These piles are a result of harvesting and hazardous fuels reduction in the wildland urban interface. These piles are burned to reduce the fuel loading in these areas. These piles are strategically burned based on their location, access, and weather conditions.

### **Hungry Horse/Glacier View Ranger District:**

**Paint Emery Central Prescribed Burns** - The prescribed 1362 acre burns on the east side of Hungry Horse Reservoir and northwest of Great Northern Mountain are part of a multi-unit wildlife habitat enhancement project. The objective identified for these burns is to create a diverse forest landscape composed of mixed tree species and stand structure, including small openings and forested areas with a diversity of tree species, shrubs, and age groups. Increased diversity and reduced downed woody material will reduce the risk of severe wildland fire and its effects on resources in the area.

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**Firefighter Mountain Prescribed Burns** - The objective of this 295 acre project on the east side Hungry Horse Reservoir on and adjacent to Firefighter Mountain is to change forest structure and density to portions of the treatment area by applying low to moderate intensity fire. The expected outcome will restore and enhance grass and shrub components, make the area more productive for ungulates and other foraging wildlife, and curb wildland fire spread by reducing fuel loadings and tree density in the forest area.

In total, 1,657 acres are planned for treatment. Additional information will be distributed and hunters will need to keep informed as to the current status of project implementation as area closures may be in effect.

**Swan Lake Ranger District:**

**Meadow Smith Area** – This project includes under-burning timber stands located within the Meadow and Smith Creek areas of the Swan Valley. These treatments will use prescribed fire for fuels reduction, vegetation regeneration, and wildlife habitat improvement.

**Piper Creek Area** –The Mission Upland Burning Project will be implemented in phases during the fall. A total of 1,036 acres will be treated in the Piper Creek Drainage. The project will help allow future lightning-caused fires to play a more natural role within and outside Mission Mountain Wilderness. There may be temporary closures in the area including the Piper Creek Trail # 119 during different phase of burning.

**Haskill Mountain area** – Logging slash from previously logged areas will be treated with fire to reduce hazardous fuels as well as create favorable conditions for natural regeneration of plant and tree species.

**Pile Burning** – Hand or Machine piles are located in several locations within the Swan Valley, Blacktail Mountain, and Haskill Mountain as a result of but not limited to: logging, hazardous fuels reduction in the wildland urban interface, hazard tree removal, and trail or road construction. These piles are burned to reduce the fuel loads in these areas. These piles are strategically burned based on their location, access, and weather conditions.

**Spotted Bear Ranger District:**

**Spotted Bear River** – Treat 12 acres using hand ignition near Spotted Bear Lake for hazardous fuel reduction and improving winter range habitat.

**Horse Ridge** – Treat 153 acres using hand ignition or combination of hand and aerial ignition for hazardous fuel reduction and improving winter range habitat.

**Soldier Addition** - Treat 416 acres- using aerial ignition near the Gorge Creek trail head to improve winter range habitat.

**Pile Burning** – Hand and machine piles are located in several locations within the Tin Mule project area on the west side of the South Fork River near Kah Mountain.

For additional information about these projects contact the appropriate Ranger Station:

Tally Lake Ranger District: 406-758-5204

Hungry Horse/Glacier View Ranger District: 406-387-3800

Spotted Bear Ranger District: 406-758-5376

Swan Lake Ranger District: 406-837-7500

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